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The nest is made of dried grass. Their song was very sweet and was kept up the entire summer, except for a short time when they were molting. In November they began gathering in flocks preparatory to migrating.

SIDNEY S. WILSON, *St. Joseph, Mo.*

NOTES ON SOME MINNESOTA BIRDS.—I made a trip of two weeks last June, 200 miles south-west of St. Paul, to Jackson county—noted for its many water birds, where the many small lakes and sloughs afford splendid opportunities for nesting.

Among the commonest breeding birds of the county are the Black Terns, which nest by the hundreds in nearly every slough which has water deep enough. In some places the water was not over ten inches deep, while in the neighborhood of St. Paul the depth is never less than two feet. In every instance where a barb-wire fence ran through the slough, as often happens in submerged meadows, a colony of Black Terns would be found nesting along the fence.

A single colony of four pairs of Forter's Terns was found nesting in the center of a large slough a mile or more across, in the water but four feet deep. The nests were as large as the average Coot's nest and very compactly built of dead rushes, eight inches high. On June 7th, the nests all contained three eggs very well incubated. In the same slough was an immense colony of Black-crowned Night Herons in a patch of wild rice 500 feet from shore. The nests all contained from one to four fresh eggs. Near by a nest containing nine eggs of the Ruddy Duck was found on the top of a Grebe's nest which had been built on an old muskrat run—a common situation in this locality—in the midst of a colony of fifteen or twenty nests of the Horned Grebe. The nests of the Horned Grebe contained from four to seven eggs each, five being the average number.

The only nest of the Mallard I found while there was in a clump of rushes about forty feet from the shore, and was very substantially built of grass and rushes with very little down, and containing eleven fresh eggs.

The Blue-wing Teal and Shovelers nest abundantly in the tall grass about the shores of the slough, and many deserted nests as well as those with incubated eggs were found. This region used to be a great breeding place for the Sandhill Crane some twenty years ago, but it is a novelty to see a bird now.

The Long- and Short-billed Marsh Wrens also nest in the wild rice

and cat-tails, along with the Yellow-headed Blackbird, which are met with at almost every step. But many of the wren's nests were just finished or contained only partial sets.

Along the edges of the sloughs, the Tree Swallow nests abundantly in old holes of Downy Woodpeckers or Flickers, from five to seven eggs being laid; but rarely over five, which is the average set.

WALTON I. MITCHELL, *St. Paul, Minn.*

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### COMMITTEE ON GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION.

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"And now comes the dull season" sighs many an ornithologist, as he lays by his field-glasses and note-book and prepares to go into winter quarters. But this thing need not be. Winter is the best time to begin the work on the local *bird census*. At this time of the year the bird population of any given area may be not only estimated but counted with reasonable accuracy. Our editor has kindly consented to give space to census reports in the February BULLETIN. Let each of our members who can possibly afford the time, put in a day or two, this coming holiday vacation, taking the census of all the birds found in their village, or on the farm, or, if in the city, in the neighboring park.

Some of our northern members will be surprised at the number of Woodpeckers, Kinglets, Chickadees and foolhardy Robins which a systematic search will discover. List every individual and send the result, together with a brief description of the area examined and such remarks as occur to you, to the chairman of the committee. Such reports as are available for immediate publication will appear in the February BULLETIN, and the rest will be retained (with permission) as a nucleus for more extended work.

W. L. DAWSON, *Oberlin, O.*

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### ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

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An unofficial note from Mr. Frank L. Burns, Judge of Elections, announces the election of the following officers:

*President*.—R. M. Strong, Lake Forest, Ill.

*Vice-President*.—N. Hollister, Delavan, Wis.

*Secretary*.—W. L. Dawson, Oberlin, Ohio.

*Treasurer*.—Lynds Jones, Oberlin, Ohio.